

LAS VEGAS METROPOLITAN POLICE DEPARTMENT
VOLUNTARY STATEMENT
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EVENT#: 171001-3519

SPECIFIC CRIME: ACTIVE SHOOTER / MURDER

DATE OCCURRED: 10-01-17

TIME OCCURRED: 2208 HOURS

LOCATION OF OCCURRENCE: MANDALAY BAY RESORT AND CASINO
3950 S. LAS VEGAS BOULEVARD
LAS VEGAS, NV 89119

CITY OF LAS VEGAS

CLARK COUNTY

NAME OF PERSON GIVING STATEMENT: OFFICER MATTHEW DONALDSON (MD), P# 12935

DOB:

SOCIAL SECURITY #:

RACE:

SEX:

HEIGHT:

WEIGHT:

HAIR:

EYES:

HOME ADDRESS:

PHONE 1:

WORK ADDRESS:

PHONE 2:

The following is the transcription of a tape-recorded interview conducted by DETECTIVE K. PLOENSE (KP), P# 6269, LVMPD FORCE INVESTIGATION TEAM, on 10-03-17 at 1820 hours. Also are Detective M. Scimenti (MS), P# 6239, and Las Vegas Police Protective Association representative B. Yant (BY), P# 6956.

KP: Operator, this is Detective K. Ploense, P# 6269, with the Force Investigation Team conducting a recorded statement with Matthew, M-A-T-T-H-E-W, Donaldson. Ah, that's D-O-N-A-L-D-S-O-N. P# 12935. His call sign is George Charlie 45. Ah, his date of hire is [REDACTED]. His current assignment is, ah, Gang Vice Bureau. Um, I'm sorry, your, ah - your squad number?

MD: GC40.

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KP: GC40. Ah, his RDO's are Thursday, Friday, Saturday. His hours of operation are 1500 to 0100 and his vehicle number is 9645. This interview is in reference to an officer involved shooting that occurred on 10-01-17 at 2208 hours in the area of 3950 South Las Vegas Boulevard, Las Vegas, Nevada. Ah, which is the Mandalay Bay, ah, Casino and - Hotel and Casino. Today's date is 10-03-17 and the time, current time is 1820 hours. This statement's being conducted at 400 South MLK, building 'C', Las Vegas, Nevada, 89106, which is the Metro Headquarters. Also present is Michael Scilimenti, P# 6239 and his, ah, PPA Representative Bryan - Bryan Yant, P# 6956. Um, Officer - Detective Donaldson, are you aware this interview is being recorded?

MD: Yes.

KP: Okay, before we get started you're currently wearing the standard LVMPD uniform. Is that correct?

MD: Yes.

KP: However, on that night if you could describe exactly what you wearing on the night of the incident and your equipment please.

MD: I was wearing a, ah, gray in color Under Armor long sleeve button-up shirt. Blue Levis jeans, I had a pair of Ariat cowboy boots on. Um, I had, ah, a green in color tac vest that consisted of, ah - I had a Taser, flashlight. Two rifle magazines, three pistol 9mm magazines to a Glock. Glock 17. Ah, on the front of my chest it says, ah, on the right side on a black patch in yellow writing large police lettering. Says, 'Gang

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Unit' underneath that. Ah, the left side of my chest is a Metro, ah, Velcro badge it says 'Metropolitan Police' on it and the back side of my vest it says, ah, 'Police Gang Unit' black patch and yellow lettering. Um, I did not have a helmet on at the time. I think that's about as best as I can describe it.

KP: 'Kay. Um, and.

MD: And I also had a - ah, my rifle with me as well.

KP: Rifle, okay. And no body worn camera?

MD: No.

KP: Body worn camera, correct? None, okay. So you're - so you had a Glock 17?

MD: Yes, on my chest.

KP: A Glock 19?

MD: Yes. Concealed.

KP: And then your rifle slung?

MD: Yes.

KP: Okay. And the model of one of the Glocks was 17 you said?

MD: Yes.

KP: A Glock 19 and then a Troy 22-.223 platform rifle.

MD: Yes.

KP: Okay. Ah, in which both Glocks would be 9mm and of course the rifle is a .223?

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MD: Yes.

KP: Ah, the serial number for the Glock 17 you've already told me it's [REDACTED]

[REDACTED] And it is unknown at this time what the Glock 19 or the rifle serial numbers are but those are rifle - those are weapons you normally qual with every quarter?

MD: Yes.

KP: Okay. Okay, um, so let's get started. You're on duty, how did you hear about the call? We can take you back to that night.

MD: We were - ah, I say we, my squad GC40 we were in the 'B' building 3rd floor, Gang office. Ah, my Sergeant Tim Stovall informed us at about 10:08, 2208 that there was an active shooter, ah, in Convention Center. We left the - the office. The, ah - as the squad went down to the parking garage. Um, put on my tac vest and, ah, grabbed my rifle out of the back of my truck. I picked up, ah, Officer Blake Walford who is gang enforcement that was riding with us in investigations that night. Um, Blake got his tac vest, ah, rifle plates, ah, out of his vehicle and his rifle. Um, he got, you want me to describe his clothing? What he was wearing, okay. So he got in my truck with me, it was probably 2210, 2211-ish by that time. Got, ah - started rolling Code 3 down, ah, on the 15 so it was from Charleston to the 15 south. As we were rolling south we were just listening to radio traffic on Convention Center Area Command to get the latest updates where the shooter was or most updated info as far as best, ah - ah, course of approach. And, ah, the officers on the radio and dispatch were

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saying, "Do not approach from the north. You would be in direct fire from wherever the shooter was - he was believed to be in a higher level floor of the Mandalay Bay somewhere. So I did not go off of Tropicana, I went south on the 15 to Russell. I exited Russell. West or I'm sorry east to the Boulevard. I stopped at the intersection of the Boulevard and Russell. Dismounted the vehicle and at that time there was a sergeant, ah - um, Bryce Martines. And then Brian Bunitsky and, ah, Mike Teal were at that location. And I said, "We need to get inside," and there was a group of officers that were, ah, saying over the radio that they were pinned down in front of the - the casino somewhere. So, from where we were at the Russell and the Boulevard we get - I knew I - from working formally or Convention Center PD I knew I can get into the backside of Mandalay Bay in - in through the convention center down that long corridor and get in. So I said, "If we get in here we can get out to the lobby and we can probably just do officer rescues if they're - if they're pinned down." So, we ran as a group, um, from the Boulevard and Russell toward, ah, the convention center. Ah, like Mandalay Be- or not the beach the Daylight Beach Club entrance on the, I guess it's the southeast side of Mandalay Bay. And I guess me and Blake were kind of moving a lot faster than the rest of the group and we were kind of way ahead and we're trying to get the rest of the group to catch up with us but, um, I don't know if - I wasn't back there with them they were - ah, if they were trying to come up with another plan or - or something but just kept yelling for them like, "We need to get up we need to get in here." And we made entrance into the - the convention center hallway and, ah, at that point, ah, kept going, ah, I guess it would be north through

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the in- inside of the property through the convention center hallway. There was civilians running out towards us. But I think that me and Blake were in plain clothes and they didn't see uniforms initially they - they were - started screaming when they saw us until we started yelling, "Police, police, police," and waving 'em out like, "You need to come out, come out, come out." They were running away from us at first. They didn't know who we were. But got into the casino. Um, at that point I had, ah, just like Bryan's wearing now a pair of Ariat cowboy boots on my - my feet were like tore up so I took my boots off 'cause I - it hurt so bad to have boots on so I took 'em off. And just threw 'em over by the elevator bank. Got to the elevator bank and that's where I met up with Levi Hancock and he was in full SWAT gear. He's Zebra 20 and, ah, at that point, um, he knew or everybody fair- pretty much knew that the shooter was on the 32nd floor 'cause the security guard had already been shot on the 32nd floor. So there was a lot of reports of other shooters in other areas but as far as we knew inside of Mandalay Bay that's where this shooter was. And, ah, I think me, Blake and Bunitsky, um, went into the elevator with Levi. And we got engineer keys to go to the 32nd floor. We went up to the 32nd floor and got into like an atrium that's a tri-hallway. Ah, inside the atrium there was a couple of detectives up there and Sergeant Matchko was in the hallway. And he had a couple of officers down the target hallway. That were kind of stuck, ah, because that suspect had - had shot out the end door, the suite was at the very endcap of the - of the hallway and he had shot out that door. And they were kind of trapped in that - in that corridor so. Levi took me and Brian. And I'm not sure who else. Oh, me and Brian and Blake. Ah, down to

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the 32nd or 31st floor. We went north through that corridor and, ah, we knew that there was a stairwell that was almost connected to where the suspect's door was on the 32nd floor. Once we got in that stairwell there was another group of officers that, ah, names I, escape me besides a few. I got up into that stairwell corridor. And there was Steve Trzpis was at the door. Ah, inside that corridor closest to the - this is without entering that corridor but it would have been two closed doors. And then opening that second door would have been the suspect's door at the end of the corridor on the left. So Steve Trzpis had a shield. Um, Dave Newton was up there, Josh Bitsko, me, Levi, ah, Perckett. Um, Blake and, ah, Bunitsky were up in that - in the - kind of in that little, ah, doorway area and, um, Levi was trying to get us all to, ah - to take the fluorescent lights and try to like disconnect 'em or break 'em but - while trying to be quiet about it. So we were trying to figure out a plan and, ah, just listening for - for any activity in that - in that room. Levi, um, was trying to transmit over his radio that he was gonna breach the door. It didn't transmit so I called Will Huddler direct on my phone. And Will answered the phone and I put him right on the phone with Levi. And Levi just let him know, "Hey, I've got a group of officers with me. Ah, we're gonna breach this door. And he's gonna put a charge on the door." So he took a charge out of his tac vest. Um, we very quietly opened up the doors and just trying to monitor what was going on in that hallway. Once Levi got his charges set up. He quickly got outside in the hallway. He put the charge on the door. Came back inside with us. And, ah, he tran- he was able to transmit that he was gonna breach the door to see if he got any type of response out of the - out of

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that doorway. So his intent was that if we blow the door he's gonna think we're gonna coming in immediately and he's gonna start shooting out of that door. So everybody was stacked up. Um, the same people I'm talking about but the order I don't really remember. I was - we were all - I mean it was in a space about the size of this table so there's seven grown men standing in the 4 foot box. So, um. Levi got his charge set up. He transmitted over the radio, ah, that he was gonna breach the door. "Breach, breach, breach." And he blew up the - blew the charge and it blew the door. We opened - Levi was point at that time. He opened the door slowly and just started cutting the pie. And he could, ah - he could see a lot of rifles inside of the room. The door wasn't completely off. At that point we - as we started to go in he was just - we were all taking Levi's lead in - in a stack. And, ah, we removed the rest of the door at that time I could see a Sean, is O'Connell. Not O'Donnell, O'Connell, ah, running and he was in his full SWAT gear. Ah, running down the hallway as we were coming out of that stairwell. He was with, ah - ah, Mags - ah, Magceycey, Officer Magceycey from, ah, South Central and then we just flowed into the room. It was a very large open room that it was kind of like - like I said it was a endcap room and it there was kind of 180. So, ah, Levi had gone right and I'm not sure who went with him, what officers went with him, I was behind Sean. And I went with Sean to the left. I could see as I entered the room there was probably 25 to 30 rifles. Ah, just kind of intermittently spread out across the floor. Ah, a few of the rifles were set up like in battle positions at the broken windows on bipods. I could see that there was a like a range finder and a spotting scope that was set up on a bipod or tripod. I could

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see one dead white male. Ah, like a shaved head, like gray hair. He looked to be about 55. You know, he was bleeding from the face and laying straight on his - on his back. His hands were at this sides. His feet were facing, ah, towards the window. We passed the body. We went to the left into the room. And started clearing a bedroom. And stayed behind Sean cleared the bathroom. Um, came back out cleared that room. And at that time they were having trouble on the other side of the, ah - on the right side there's another bedroom and the door couldn't be breached and they were trying to kick it but then, ah, he couldn't get through so Levi put another charge on that door and, ah, breached that door. And I remember Sean saying - 'cause none of us had rifle pla- well some of us had rifle plates but he was one of the few officers that had, ah, rifle plates so he and Levi set up on the door. When they breached the door that Levi and Sean were gonna go in just because they had the plates. And, ah, once they - they blew that door, that interior door I - there was so much dust and, ah, just drywall and stuff in the air I couldn't see who even made entry into that room. But it was - it was cleared very quickly at that point. And at that I was kind of just back in a little small corridor by like this kitchen-kitchenette thing, ah, with Sergeant Bitsko. And once that room is cleared, ah, Levi came out and just - we just made the scene static. Everybody got out of the room, cleared the room and then we just started clearing the other doors that were, ah, outside of the other - outside the, ah - the hallway. I mean in the hallway outside of that room and just started doing, ah, welfare checks down the hallway. And then, ah, went back downstairs after it cleared like one or two rooms with Blake. And, ah, I

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located my boots again in the - in the - in the lobby. I didn't put 'em back on because my feet hurt so bad. But went back out towards the cars to get my truck and I got assigned to a force protection team. And then, ah, ended up getting a pair of shoes from a firefighter who gave me a pair of his sneakers and I jumped on a force protection team and went in with Clark County FD to, ah, the actual concert location and started to look for survivors and tagging, ah, deceased bodies inside the - the concert for the next 30, 40, 50 minutes.

KP: Um-kay. I just got a couple questions for you. When you first got there you parked over by the Shark Reef, convention area.

MD: It was right in the intersection of Russell and the Boulevard dead center.

KP: Oh, right in the...

MD: Dead center on the Boulevard.

KP: Did you hear gunshot when you first got there?

MD: When we were pulling up as were driving I - I could hear gunshots in the distance but I - but when I got out of the truck I don't recall if I heard any gunshots when I got out.

KP: Running up there you didn't hear any? Not sure?

MD: Mm, no.

KP: Okay. Um, you were saying, ah, corridor, is that - what - what do you mean by the corridor? The hallway or?

MD: On the 32nd floor or?

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KP: Yes, you kept saying - you kept saying...

MD: There's - there's...

KP: ...corridor and I'm kind of confused what the corridor.

MD: ...a long, long hallway.

KP: Yeah.

MD: And it was - and I mean it's probably - once you're inside the - if you're looking at the Mandalay Bay those long, ah, offshoots that the building was like a - you know, like 'Y' sort of.

KP: Okay.

MD: The hallways are about...

KP: So just the hallway and...

MD: ...100 meters long, yeah.

KP: And down the hallway is the rooms on each side?

MD: Right.

KP: Okay, okay.

MD: And at the very end there's a double door that was the suspect's room.

((Crosstalk))

KP: So how did you get onto that floor?

MD: The elevator through the use of the engineer's keys.

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KP: Okay, did you come right up to the 32nd?

MD: Thirty-second floor.

KP: Okay. Then how did you get down the hallway or corridor?

MD: We went down to the 31st floor.

KP: Okay and then back...

MD: And then walked down that same corridor.

KP: Uh-huh.

MD: Underneath through...

KP: Underneath...

MD: ...under the 32nd floor.

KP: ...two floors down.

MD: One floor down.

KP: One floor, okay.

MD: Walked up the stairwell which is - the doorway comes out right at the suspect's door.

KP: Okay. So you walked up the stairway.

MD: Yep.

KP: Did you have any trouble getting through that - that - was there a door at the top of the stairway?

MD: There's two doors.

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KP: Two doors. Any trouble getting in through any of those doors? That you remember.

MD: Yes. Ah, I don't know why but one of 'em was like, ah, locked from like the inside. So I don't know how that happened or if it was like a automatic lock thing or something that the - the hotel. Like an automatic electronic thing but it was - one of the doors was locked if it - I can't remember if it was the in- the initial interior door from the stairwell into the little space between the two doors. Or if it was the second one.

KP: Okay. And how'd you get through the door then if it was, appeared lock?

MD: Ah, Levi had some breaching tools and just popped the door.

KP: Okay, okay. Okay. Um, okay, anything Mike?

MS: Do you remember how many people entered the room with you?

((Crosstalk))

MD: Ah, when we were in the initial small little space between the two doors it was me, Steve Trzpis, Dave Newton, Sergeant Bitsko, Blake and Levi. And as far as anybody else behind me.

KP: No, entering the suspect's room, I'm sorry.

MD: I know but I'm saying...

KP: Oh.

MD: ...as far as anybody behind me.

KP: Yeah.

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MD: I don't know if any of them did but I did see Sean and Mags run in right as I was coming out we - so it - what's that what'd I say Steve, me, Blake, Bitsko, Newton, Levi. One, two plus - so eight went in the room. But anybody else that came in after that I have no idea.

KP: Um, did you discharge your weapon at all?

MD: No.

KP: Did you hear any gunshots inside the room?

MD: I don't recall. I mean there was explosions and stuff I. And I was on the other side with, ah, Sean and none of us did.

KP: Okay. But two pistols and a rifle none of 'em discharged?

MD: Mm-mm.

KP: You didn't discharge any, okay. PPA Rep. Yant?

BY: Nothing.

KP: Okay. You good, okay. Operator, this is the end of the interview. The same people preset, same date. And the time is 1839 hours. Thank you.

MD: Thanks.

THIS VOLUNTARY STATEMENT WAS COMPLETED AT LVMPD HEADQUARTERS, 400 S. MARTIN LUTHER KING BOULEVARD, LAS VEGAS, NV 89106, ON THE 3RD DAY OF OCTOBER 2017 AT 1839 HOURS.

KP: MS: (NET TRANSCRIPTS)
FIT2017-032

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